

NEWS—FALL 1985

The **STEIN WILDERNESS**
IS IN DANGER OF IMMEDIATE
DESTRUCTION!

**FOREST MINISTER'S STEIN STAND COSTLY
TO PUBLIC AND INDUSTRY**

Attempt To 'Buy' Votes In Own Riding May Backfire

said a Forest Service official who did not want his name revealed. Privately he admitted that the amount of government subsidy needed to provide road access into the rugged Stein valley so that it can be logged is unprecedented. "The economics just don't make sense."

Is Waterland, the B.C. Minister of Forests and MLA for the riding which includes the Stein, trying to keep the logging interests in his own riding happy at any cost?

The cost may be high indeed. Just to get the wood out will take several million tax dollars, money, which environmentalists argue could be spent more wisely elsewhere creating jobs like intensively planting the

STEIN SACRED TO LYTTON NATIVES —Vow To Prevent Logging

In September the Lytton Natives of the Nl'akapmx Nation formally joined with the Lillooet Tribal Council to oppose logging of the Stein. One of the Lytton reserves is located at junction of the Fraser and Stein Rivers.

In a press release, Chief Ruby Dunstan said the main issue is that the proposed development violates their aboriginal title which has never been relinquished through treaty. Her people want the Stein preserved because it is a place with special spiritual and sacred significance for them. They also recognize that increased access would have a harmful impact on their "Westside" (of the Fraser) way of life.

Although not opposed to all logging, they specifically oppose any Stein development, including tourism, until their Nation's general land claim is settled. When Chief Dunstan was asked whether or not the Indians would log the Stein if they got the valley as part of their land claim settlement, she responded, "Would you bulldoze down a perfectly good mansion worth millions of dollars that had been in your family for generations?" No way.

The Band is hosting a Thanksgiving celebration at the mouth of the Stein. It is open to the general public to further gather support for their resolve to prevent the planned destruction of their sacred Stein Valley.

mills to produce value-added products from wood now left rotting in the clearcuts.

The hidden cost is loss of credibility. How can the B.C. government continue to argue that they are not subsidizing the logging industry and thereby competing unfairly in U.S. markets?

The Stein clearly proves the American case.

Already the radical American environmental press, Earth First, is spreading news about the Stein. It is only a matter of time before the environmentally aware American public which threatened to boycott travel to B.C. and thus helped bring about a halt to the B.C. wolf kill, joins with the U. S. loggers who say that the Canadians are liquidating their forests, using government subsidies to log faster and sell cheaper.

Evidence already shows that the B.C. government has been running its Forest Service at a deficit for several years to give the industry a break. In the United States, the stumpage (the tree cutting tax) is nearly twice B.C.'s. There, it not only pays for replanting trees on a sustained yield basis, it also pays to establish

Unfair.

Don't think that the Stein situation will escape the U.S. media's attention. When the conflict reaches confrontation, as it surely will the way things are going now, it's the sort of ammunition the U.S. Congress will use to impose the dreaded tarriff on Canadian lumber. Such an American tax will cost tens of thousands of Canadian jobs. Logging the Stein could ultimately cost Canadians billions of dollars.

The Stein issue is accelerating to confrontation. Waterland is pushing it that way. His recent statement, "I'm not concerned with any Native claim on the Stein. The B.C. government, regardless of what party has been in power has never recognized land title claims", is motivating Natives—one-third of his constituents—to get on the voters list. His close-minded refusal to meet with locals who want to find a way to save the Stein and use the logging subsidy more wisely may be a political mistake.

With an election just around the corner, the Stein could be Waterland's and the Social Credit's Waterloo.

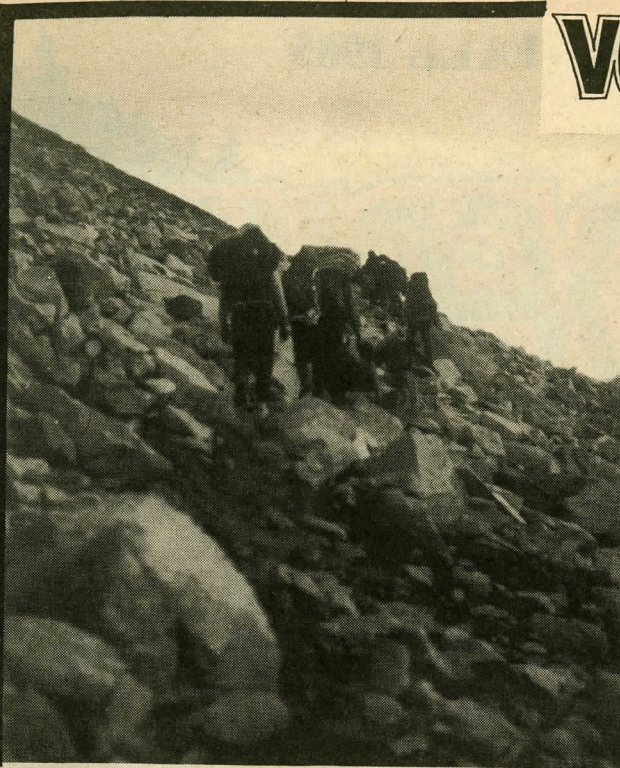
BECAUSE YOU CARE

Write to the Premier of British Columbia, Bill Bennett, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, B.C., V8X 1X4 with a copy to the Leader of the Opposition, Bob Skelley, same address, voicing your opinion on the proposed logging of the Stein, the last major wilderness watershed in Southern B.C.



Clear-cut near Lizzie Creek, over the ridge from Stein Lake

VOICES FOR THE WILDERNESS - Stein



Across the scree to the site



Joe Washington, Lummi elder arrives

The Stein River Valley is an unblemished corridor of vast mountains and glaciers, virgin forests and rugged side-valleys. It remains essentially the same as it was thousands of years ago, a 460 square mile unlogged, relatively unknown wilderness watershed. Yet it is located just a few hours drive from what is now the largest population center in western Canada.

For at least 7,000 years the Natives of the Lytton-Lillooet area tapped the Stein Valley for the spiritual power that is still present today. Their pictographs along the banks and in the adjoining canyons of the Stein is one of the finest collections of early native communication remaining in B.C.

For years the Stein was a well kept secret, largely unappreciated for its unique virtues by the incoming B.C. immigrants. But as the population and economy of B.C. boomed, especially in the Lower Mainland after World War II, the Stein gained recognition as an area of outstanding ecological, aesthetic, and cultural value. This pristine valley is now threatened by logging, on the verge of being lost forever.

For the last eight years the logging interests and those who seek to preserve the Stein as it is have been engaged in an increasingly intense battle over the valley's future. At stake is not only the last major unlogged wilderness watershed in southern B.C., but also the ability of people who live closest to the threatened area to retain control over their destiny.

To bring public attention and awareness to the Stein Valley, and to create better understanding between Native and non-natives working to protect the Stein, the Lillooet Tribal Council sponsored a "Voices For the Wilderness" Festival. The event, held on the Labour Day weekend in 1985, was unprecedented in B.C., Canada and maybe even North America. Nearly five hundred spirited individuals com-

pleted a not-so-easy five kilometre hike over a boulder-strewn alpine pass to reach the Festival site, a meadow situated at approximately 6,500 feet altitude beside a large alpine lake in the upper reaches of the Stein watershed.

Many who came already knew of the Stein's treasures. Some had previously taken the trail up the valley from the junction of the Stein and Fraser Rivers through lovely Ponderosa pine forests, to the jewel-like lakes surrounded by glaciers and peaks at the river's headwaters. They knew, as the Natives knew, that the Stein is a place of strength, mystery, and great beauty.

Those who spoke for the Stein, Native leaders as well as environmentalists, detailed not only the Stein's pristine nature and heritage but also the valley's place within the overall provincial wilderness picture. That picture shows a province that has protected just five percent of its land in parks. Only one-half of one percent is protected in national parks. Less than half of the park lands are forests. Asking that the Stein's timber be spared the rip of the chainsaw is not asking too much. Indeed, if all of B.C.'s principal wilderness conflicts—South Moresby, Meares Island, the Stikine River, and many others—were resolved and parks created, their combined park area would add up to less than two percent of B.C.'s land.

The Stein seems especially entitled to preservation because, unlike Meares and South Moresby, there is no economic justification for 'harvesting' its timber. It will take three years of costly road building, a cost the taxpayer will bear to the tune of three million dollars, before the first merchantable timber is reached, twenty kilometres upstream from the confluence of the Stein and the Fraser. Without further government subsidies, B.C. Forest Products, in an effort to keep alive their mill at Boston Bar (which has yet to turn a profit), will lose approximately \$46 million over the next few decades by logging the marginal Stein timber.



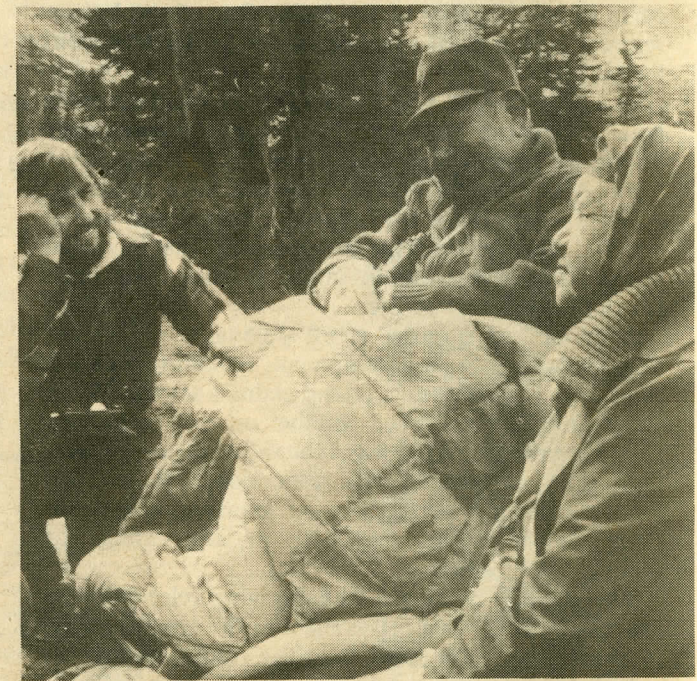
Tents dot the alpine...



Feast time



Louis Philips, Lytton elder speaking at the Stein Festival



Louis Philips tells about his love for the Stein

Alpine Festival Aug.31 - Sept 3, 1985

In addition to the aesthetic and spiritual arguments against logging, it is obvious that logging the Valley makes no economic sense. But why does the government persist?

Around the fires of the second evening, while the air temperature dropped to a numbing sub-zero, an eagle feather was passed amongst those who wished to speak about ways to protect the Stein. They voiced their views on tactics in the battle, what they thought was necessary in order to achieve preservation of the Valley. Tasks and strategies were discussed, tentative plans were made. Perhaps never in the short history of the B.C. wilderness movement had so many people -most of them strangers to one another-spoke so passionately and clearly for one particular place. Strength was shared around the fires. Most slept with the confidence and conviction that the Stein would be saved, especially as the circle of people who know the facts of the issue continues to grow.

Others came to the Festival out of a sense of curiosity. Some had never hiked before. Some hadn't hiked in twenty years. But all of them made it over the pass to the campsites in the alpine meadows. Amongst them was a six-week-old baby, toted by her outdoor-weathered parents. A blind man hiked the distance, led by his friend over the rocks and roots. Another man, from Edmonton, hobbled his way on crutches over the path. One two-year-old came with her parents, recent immigrants from Hong Kong on their first wilderness hike. They had no backpacks, only duffle bags slung over their shoulders. Their tent poles (not the usual backpacker variety) weighed fifteen pounds. They, too, made it, helped by others, and smiled like everyone else when it came time to shed the weight and set up camp. Wilderness preservation is for the elite?

Native peoples, particularly the elders (one even in a wheelchair) who were brought in by helicopter, brought with them their different cultural outlook and experience. For many of the non-natives at the Festival, a highlight was

to happy rhythms. Around the eight camp fires, singing and music-making drummed into the night.

Sunday, principal fighters for the Stein addressed the Festival participants. Bundled in warm sweaters and jackets, huddled beneath blankets, many listened to the speakers addressing the economic, ecologic, cultural and spiritual consequences of a logged Stein Valley. In the distance children clambered on the slopes of the mountains ringing the lake and the Festival site, while the dedicated cooking crew fed the fires, preparing for the next feast. The north wind, clouds and hints of rain could not dampen the mood. When the rain did fall it was taken as a blessing, a sign that the hopes and dreams for the Stein's preservation would be realized.

Monday morning, time to depart. The sun took a long time to rise above the ridges and warm the earth and its friends. The last gathering brought forth a strong message from Festival organizers and Stein campaigners. The Festival participants must take the power they had gained from the weekend, using it in their schools and offices, in their cafes and conference halls, in their letters to editors and their votes to change political consciousness and government action.

As people shouldered their packs they picked up the last bits of their presence at the Festival site. Leaving the valley as they found it, they began the trek away from the lake, back over the boulder-strewn pass to the waiting transportation at the trailhead. It would be down hill almost all the way. As everyone left, a young Native boy pounded the drum, singing one more sacred song to end the Festival. But it will not be the last song sung for the Stein.

by Rob Rainer

Photos contributed by: Martin Roland, Adrian Dorst, Eugene Rogers, Barb McCandless, Judith Willington, Patrick Morrow



Hailing the rainbow and the good weather it brings



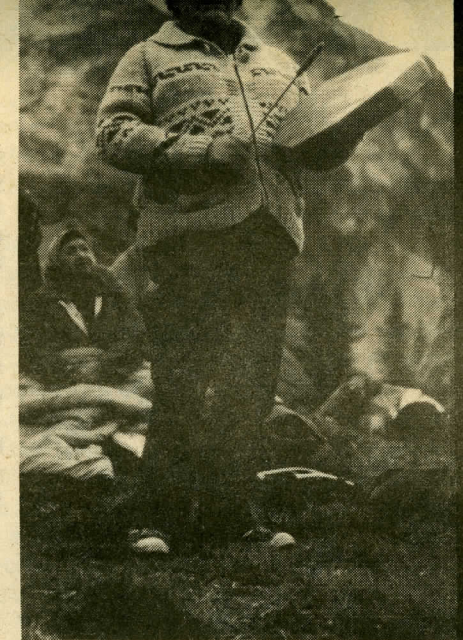
traditional pipe ceremonies, hearing their reflections and hopes for the Stein and other areas similarly endangered. As with the Meares Island issue, the Stein controversy is bringing together people who share similar feelings for their environment. From Washington State came a spiritual leader of the Lummi people. From the west coast of Vancouver Island came members of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth people. And, of course, from the Lytton-Lillooet region came the native leaders whose land is so very much threatened now.

That first night the Lillooet Tribal Council gave a feast. Heaping platefulls of barbecued salmon, potatoes, corn and bannock. High in the alpine, 500 people feasted away, while the day faded into night, the stars glimmered slowly into view and the temperatures slowly dropped to zero.

There were many people to meet, names to learn, contacts to make in uniting to fight for the Stein. After dinner, full stomachs yielded



Joe Washington and the media



Napoleon Kruger, Penticton Band



Joe David and J. C. Lucas of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth Nation bring support from Meares



Mabel Joe, elder from Merritt and Hilda Austin, Lytton elder

...anner gainner support for their resolve to prevent
the planned destruction of their sacred Stein Valley.

Voices for the Wilderness WILL BE HEARD!



ADOPT a TREE

Your adopted tree lives in a beautiful old growth forest in Southern British Columbia's last remaining major wilderness watershed. It grows on the route of a proposed logging road into the heart of the rugged Stein.

The B.C. government plans to allow it to be cut down in the very near future. Logging the beautiful Stein Valley is irresponsible. It will cost the B.C. taxpayer millions of dollars in direct subsidies—the trees are not otherwise worth logging—while destroying an irreplaceable wilderness treasure. **BUT YOU CAN HELP SAVE THIS WILDERNESS.**

With every adoption you will receive

- ★ photo of tree and map of tree's exact location
- ★ unlimited visiting rights - you can't take it home
- ★ tax deductible receipt
- ★ plus your tree will be ribboned with the name YOU give it (Sammy the Cedar is mine!)

Here is my tax deductible donation.
I understand all proceeds will be spent to

SAVE THE STEIN \$100
 \$ 50
 \$ 20

Tree Type: Fir Ponderosa Pine Cedar

My Tree's Name is _____

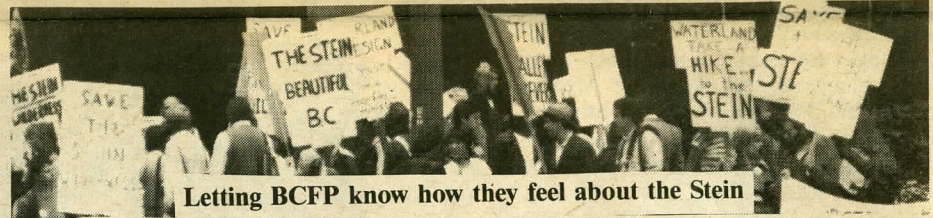
Name _____

Address _____

Postal Code _____

Please send to: Western Canada
Wilderness
Committee
1200 Hornby Street
Vancouver, B.C.
V6Z 2E2

Make checks payable to Western Canada
Wilderness Committee (WCWC)-Save The
Stein Fund



Letting BCFP know how they feel about the Stein

First Trees Adopted

The Stein Action Committee completed the first 20 tree adoptions on October 3. The polaroid tree portraits came out beautifully. Five year old Robert Lightfoot assisted, posing with most of the adoptees, holding up the name on the ribbon for the camera.

The first tree was named by its adoptor (surely not Bill?) W. A. C. Bennett. The next was Hum-tree Bogart, then Joey, followed by Sir Laurence Cottonwood III.

Ponderosa pine is the recommended tree most needing adoption. They predominate along the beginning of the proposed logging road right-of-way.

"Because of the costs involved in fighting the expropriation of private farmland for the first few hundred metres of the proposed logging road and the need for more educational material, your adoption is really needed", explained an action committee spokeswoman. "If you can't afford the adoption, any small donation will help. All will be acknowledged and a tax receipt issued with the money immediately put to good use."

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Info Picket Brings Results

Stein preservation advocates, after returning from the Voices for the Wilderness Alpine Festival on Labour Day weekend, set-up an informational picket in front of B.C. Forest Products office in Vancouver. Company officials met with a delegation of picketers and agreed to a further meeting with those concerned, including top officials of the B.C. Forest Ministry.

The company insisted that it is only following orders from the Ministry of Forests and not taking the lead in the plans to log the Stein.

